prohibition under any circumstances. I have heard these same terms used also by the natives in the vicinity of Coquilhatville.

The body becomes flabby and without strength, and this weakness ends in a fatal paralysis (bɔɔngɛ nɔyɛnyaka or nkatɛkɛ). In addition, the girls feared that their sexual organs, not yet fully formed, would be torn. They were also imbued with a very intense fear: bofolu w'ɛɛnde, "the fear of males," bofolu w'ɛmato, "the fear of females." They also feared death -- bɔlɔtɔkɛ iwɛ. The parents added that sexual acts were free from danger only between persons of the requisite age.

This does not mean that children did not commit indecent acts. The game of ɔnto, in which little girls try to cook (and which is always one of their favorite games (2) as it probably is throughout the

2. Some boys imitate this game in order to acquire the habit of preparing their own meals. Later they benefit from it on more than one occasion.

world), often gave rise to it. Small boys joined in the game in order to taste the meal. And quite naturally they began to play at "husband and wife," more or less. Often this game involved only innocent imitations, but other times touching and exhibitions occurred between children of the same sex or of opposite sexes. This game is far more dangerous nowadays, [81] because of a change in the attitude of young people toward sexual matters.

The game of ɛmbɛnkɔngɔ, in which boys, imitating monkeys, chase each other through the trees and creepers can -- and does -- result in reprehensible scenes.

In former times most girls were married before puberty. But their husbands did not touch them until they had completed their normal development.

Among some individuals the fear of sexual relations was so deeply rooted that it persisted even beyond the age limit and was

832 Kissing between persons of opposite sex is unknown. Embraces occur on the other hand but not in public; they must be considered as preparation to approaching intercourse. (1) An extraordinarily strong

1. See above, Part 1, Article III.

passion sometimes leads lovers to engage in more intimate kissing, usually as a prelude to normal intercourse. Although some natives are not shocked by such practices, more responsible people consider them improper. [95]

Article VI. Vices "Contra Naturam"

838 1. Male homosexuality

Homosexuality has been known among the Nkundó since time immemorial, among men as well as women.

Among the former it took the form of sodomy in the past, with one particular characteristic -- for which I do not know the explanation, that is, only the younger of the two men could take the active role. Nowadays among the youth, homosexuality has begun to take on a different form; the boys who practice it lie down in the positions of husband and wife. It is reported that sometimes one of the two says from time to time to his accomplice, "This is what I do with your sister." Is this an indication that here we have homosexuality only in action but not in feeling (in effectu not in affectu, as the moralists say)?

Homosexuality among the Nkundo does not seem to be the result of a special inclination for this vice; rather it has always been a last resort open to those who could not find a natural outlet for their passions. Although we cannot approve of this depravation of instinct either on rational grounds or in adherence to the faith, we must admit that it was more excusable among these peoples whose social organization was disadvantageous to many young people. At the present time there is already much less sodomy because it has become easier to get married. As for the new form of homosexuality, it may be observed especially in places where men are kept rigidly apart from relations

● 938 with the opposite sex for a long time, such as internment camps, prisons, etc.

2 Female homosexuality

Nkundó girls play at "husband and wife," and even adult married women engage in this vice. According [96] to my informants the causes are the following: first, an intense and very intimate love between two women, and second, and above all, the fact that wives of polygamists find it difficult to satisfy their passions in a natural way. Often they engage in this practice with co-wives of the same man. The greater liberty introduced through colonisation could reduce its frequency, but up till now no great improvement has been observed. What is more, in establishments where girls are too severely kept away from the opposite sex, there has been an increase.

The verb used to designate these depraved acts is yamɛma, "to each other, one against the other." The noun bomɛmo is derived from it. But these words are also used to designate a simple embrace. A more specific term is yafkya bonsɛngo; the verb yafkya (simple form: fkya) means "to press against each other."

Is there any need to say that a people like the Nkundó, whose beliefs are founded on nature, see nothing the least bit wrong with this vice? Consequently it would be desirable for educators and missionaries to draw their pupils' attention to the harm present in such practices.

3. Masturbation

939 This vice seems never to have been practiced by the Nkundó, but at the present time it is known in the large centers and in the camps; from there it gradually penetrates into the interior. Yet it seems to spread with difficulty in native society. It is understandable that a man who has acquired the habit in one of the centers does not rid himself of it without great effort; but as the natives do not have the will to corrupt others, he does not become an agent of its propagation. (1) [97]

1. In spite of frequent touching due to itching.